

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Text as Prepared for Delivery
March 25, 1994

REMARKS OF TREASURY SECRETARY LLOYD BENTSEN
MINT MEDAL CEREMONY

This is quite an honor.

It's a little disconcerting to see your face staring back at you in plaster. At least I didn't have to have plaster spread over my face like those masks these artists sometimes make. And speaking of artists, I want to thank Thomas Rogers for being so kind to me.

It's amazing how the back of the medal has something on just about everything I've done. From Texas to the Treasury -- not bad in one career. Of course, if you look at everything in between, you'd think I couldn't hold down a job.

There is one very important thing missing from the medal, though. It doesn't say I married a wonderful lady in Texas 50 years ago -- B.A. Bentsen. Best deal I ever made.

It's good to see friends here this afternoon. I've been privileged throughout my career to work with such fine people -- in the House, in business, in the Senate with so many members and such an excellent staff -- and now in the Cabinet.

You know, I came to Washington in 1949 to serve three terms in the House. I didn't figure on staying. Sam Rayburn told me that I could be speaker in 25 years. I told him I had a wife and three children, and I just couldn't cut it on \$12,500 a year, and I was returning to the private sector.

I went into business. Did all right. But something was missing. Making a deal isn't always the same as making a difference. When I set out to run for the Senate, I had two percent name recognition, and most of that was negative because they thought I was Ezra Taft Benson. It was a tough race, but we won it. And since then, I've had fun every time I had to run -- even 1988, especially 1988. Every race has made me more strongly committed to making a difference.

Along the way, I've had the opportunity to work with many of you on some of the important issues that have come up. IRAs and pension protections, trade, plant closings, health care improvements for the less fortunate, increasing our national investment rate, and now, a new list of things -- like helping turn the economy around, bringing down interest rates and holding inflation down. Like working to make full-scale health care reform a reality, like taking guns off the street, like transforming our economy for a new era, and putting economic policy on a par with foreign policy.

These all are the kinds of issues that make a difference in the lives of every American, and they're the kind of issues that make public service such a rewarding challenge.

Each of you in this room has contributed to making a difference. I know that often it has come at some sacrifice to yourself or to your families, but I think you also believe that making a difference is an honorable calling. I do.

I want to wind up by telling you what I used to tell our children: never take a job where at the end of the day they pay you off with a plaque or a medal -- but in this case, it's the best job in the world, and I thank you.